

THE
CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

VOL. I.]

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[NO. 12.

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY JOSHUA T. RUSSELL.

ON THE EARLY PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

It is confidently believed, that most of our readers are firm friends and supporters of that divine system of religion, which it is the great design of this publication to advance. We, therefore, presume, that a few brief remarks, on the *causes which chiefly contributed to the successful propagation of the gospel immediately after it was first promulgated, will not be uninteresting at this time.*

For the practise of imposition, and the prevalence of error, no period is so favourable, as that in which ignorance and superstition have usurped the throne of reason and virtue, and the principles of justice and morality have been exterminated by tyranny and vice. Under such circumstances, every system of false religion, which has met with any considerable degree of success, has been established. Had the sophistry of Pythagoras, the magick of Zoroaster, or the fictions of Mahomet, been introduced in an age of enlightened philosophy, their religious superstitions would have received the contempt they merited, and the names of their authors would have been remembered, only to be despised. But that same subtle spirit, which originated such absurd and vicious principles, failed not to improve those ages for their dissemination in which men were excited to action, only by their passions, and influenced in their opinions by prejudice and bigotry alone. Thus the vilest impostors have often been hailed as the messengers of Heaven, and their principles been welcomed as the harbingers of wisdom and peace. But, sensible of her own deformity, imposture rarely strives to establish her empire in an age of reason and philosophy, lest the light of science should pierce her specious garb, and expose her hideous form to derision and contempt. Had such been the period, and such the circumstances in which Christianity first appeared, it might have been less difficult, on human principles to account for the unprecedented success of the despised Nazarene and his twelve illiterate disciples in propagating its doctrines. But, to the honour of religion it may be asserted, that no obscure corner of the world was chosen for the theatre of its exhibition; nor was an age of darkness selected for the diffusion of its light. The Roman empire, then mistress of the world, *first* felt the genial rays of the Sun of Righteousness. She was, then, in the zenith of her political glory, and Greece, which could boast a perfection in the arts and sciences, unknown to former ages, was subject to her control.

Never before, had the human mind been so much enlightened by philosophy and refined literature. Nor did religion then share a small degree of regard and veneration. The ceremonious forms of the Jew and the idolatrous rites of the Gentile were alike scrupulously observed; and every innovation, on the religious customs of either, was noticed with a jealous eye. Hence it was quite impossible to introduce and propagate, by ordinary means, a false system of religion, and all who attempted this object, perished with their principles, in disgrace and ignominy. Thus, also, had the Messiah perished, and his cause been lost, had not its merits rested on the broad basis of eternal truth. The excellence and divinity of his religion was attested by that very learning and philosophy, which were the greatest barriers against the success of delusion. Hence, it is evident, that the moral and political state of mankind, at the introduction of Christianity, operated as powerful means of advancing its influence and glory. But, these were only secondary causes of its rapid progress through the world. For the imbecility and ignorance of the instruments first employed to disseminate the doctrines of the gospel clearly discover the interposition and aid of some divine, Almighty Power, in support of their cause.

The advent of Messiah, although not attended with the pomp and majesty, anticipated by the Jews, was wisely calculated to display the power and benevolence of God. It was not the object of his mission to augment the pride and pamper the lusts of men, but, to debase the one, and restrain the other. Hence, he did not, like Mahomet ride in the triumphant car of an earthly conqueror, presenting crowns and diadems, to excite the ambitious, and sensual gratifications to allure the profligate. Nor, like him, did he rest the evidence of his divinity on dreams and revelations fabricated in darkness, and disseminated by bribery and fraud. But, by the simplicity of his manners, the purity of his life, the sublimity of his doctrines and the notoriety of his miracles, he supported his high claims to the religious homage and veneration of the world. And by his knowledge of future events, which was clearly evinced by the exact fulfilment of all his predictions, he furnished incontrovertible evidence of his divine commission. These important facts, together with the unprecedented miracles attending his death, resurrection and ascension, carried the clearest conviction to every unprejudiced mind, of the excellence of his character, and the truth of his principles. Thus, did the Saviour open the way for his disciples and followers to extend with success the doctrines of the cross. And, to facilitate their progress and obviate every objection against their veracity, he imparted to them the gifts of speaking in unknown tongues, healing the sick, raising the dead, and performing numerous other miracles, which human power and wisdom were utterly insufficient for executing. Their preaching, also, was attended by the power of the Holy Ghost, and thousands were subdued by its irresistible operations. Greek and Jew, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, were, alike induced, to cast away the weapons of their rebellion, and bow the knee to Immanuel. By

such means the twelve illiterate fishermen of Galilee, soon blew the trump of the gospel in the remotest regions of the Roman empire. And, in a few years, the bright star of Bethlehem dispelled the dark clouds which overshadowed the Pagan nations, and irradiated the whole eastern world with the beams of its splendour. Multitudes flocked around the standard of the cross, which was often encircled with the flames of martyrdom, and cheerfully resigned honours, wealth, and life itself, to satisfy their attachment and confidence in the Captain of their salvation. No subtle philosophy could change their opinions, no tortures counteract their efforts, no powers of earth and hell check their progress. The arm of Omnipotence was their shield, and free salvation their helmet. And with these weapons, which were not carnal, but spiritual, they became powerful in pulling down the strong holds of Satan, and vanquishing the rulers of darkness.

Such were the means, and such the causes, which effected the early triumphs of Christianity. And that same power which, at first planted a church on earth, is still her protector, and shall prosper her efforts, until the wilderness shall bud and blossom like the rose, and a voice from Heaven say unto Zion, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon thee."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

It is with a degree of diffidence, the writer of this paper presumes to take notice of a subject, on which he has never heard or seen a single stricture. From this entire silence, it would, perhaps, seem right to infer the publick approbation of what he has now in view. Publick men have seen it; publick bodies have participated in it; publick journals have recorded it. After this, will it be deemed presumptuous for an individual to call in question, what has received so high a sanction?

It would be worthy only of a *spirit from beneath*; only of the most *malignant breast*, to attempt, even by a hint, to re-kindle the embers of national hostility, or national jealousy. Nothing of such a kind is here intended. The pen, that traces these lines, shall never be dipped in political controversy, or crimination. He is unworthy of the Christian name, who does not enlist his efforts, to quench those unholy passions, in which they have arisen.

Nor is it to censure the motives of those, who have been engaged in the transactions, to which allusion is here made, that a criticism is laid in publick view. No—though it is not meant here to vindicate the purity of every individual intention, (when was that ever demanded?) yet, in the great religious and benevolent designs, which are now in operation, there is too much of the hand of God, too much of the spirit and image of Jesus, for us to question the general integrity of those, who thus serve in the cause of Christ. It is the Bible that leads the way, who shall subject its disciples and direct subsidiaries to the suspicious rules of a *barbarous and superstitious age?*

Will it then, be permitted to question the pecuniary aids, which for pious uses, we have, in the United States, occasionally, consented to receive from abroad?—Turning over the pages of Bible and Missionary Society Transactions in this country, we are not seldom greeted with epistles from similar societies on foreign shores, containing very proper expressions of brotherly affection and good will; but further charged with some engaging remark like this: *We hereby transmit you, in aid of your benevolent purposes, the sum of 1, 2, or 300 pounds, &c.*

May I be convinced and forgiven! if any improper feelings have arisen in this breast, while musing on such a sentence. *America*, in the attitude of a suppliant! *America*, a pensioner on foreign bounty! *American Societies*, dependent on funds distilled like the dew in particles, too small for sense; drawing from a river fed, under *foreign* hands, by ten times ten thousand trickling rills!—*My Country!* and art thou then so sterile and so poor? Are we so weighed down with publick burthens, or are our means so limited, or our citizens so lost to enterprize, or our toils so thankless and so unprofitable? I blush to put the question. No—No—every day we live, we eat and drink sufficient for two nations, and throw away enough to keep a third. We consume enough to make us sick and make us well again, and then, the reason why we cannot *waste as much more*, is that we neglect what we *might obtain*.—Go to *another nation* for aid to our Colleges, and Seminaries, and Misssionary and Bible Societies! The *sweepings of our streets*, would pay for all our pious, and all our literary charities.

It *may* imply something, that needs qualification or correction, to put the question, yet I ask, is there not a *tameness* in *accepting* such a gift; is there not that relinquishment of the claim to efficiency of character, which is foreign both to the nature and the duty of Americans; and, not less than others, of *American Christians*? Is it not a “voluntary humility,” which neither our poverty, nor our piety demands?

Where, let me ask, is that *inhibition* in the *word of God*, which banishes *generosity* from the soul of man? Where is that poisonous *gas* in any gale of Heaven, which must extinguish this light of the human mind? Nay, it is eminently the glory of the gospel to give strength, elasticity, and scope to this spring of what is noblest in human life. Yes, I defy the unbeliever, from the annals of all time to produce any thing else so nobly generous, as what Christianity by her own proper power has produced. “*I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved*”—never fell from heathen lips, nor any lips unacquainted with the nature, and unexperienced in the power of the gospel of Christ. None ever “*took joyfully the spoiling of their goods*” without the hope of earthly gain or applause, but those who had learned of Christ.—“*It is more blessed to give than to receive*,” was the maxim of our Saviour; and it is very remarkable, that of all the traditions respecting him, this is the only one resting on indubitable authority. As if the Holy Ghost would signalize this

generous sentiment, and hang it up, another Star in the East, to be the wonder of nations, and the guide to Immanuel, not an apostle, nor inspired man, out of the limits of Four Gospels, has been allowed to transmit to posterity, on any sure authority, a single syllable, that Jesus ever spoke but this—"It is more blessed to give than to receive." Henceforth and forever, then, let generosity not merely be tolerated in the company of the Christian graces; let it be regarded, as of the very nature and spirit of Christianity. And is it then for the nineteenth century; and is it for America, the rising hope, and glory of that century, to exhibit a retrogression in the generosity of Christianity? No, no, it cannot be. We must reconstruct the hypothesis exploded above. Americans want generosity! never. "Our poverty, but not our will consents." We are too poor for the service of Christ and his church. Pious teachers of schools cannot be at large maintained; and the dearest objects on earth, beloved children, must either be committed to the drunken and the dissolute, or left to grow up in hopeless ignorance. A million of Blacks for want of the sacrifice of property (how righteously retained, thou Day of Wrath shalt show) must be doomed to the condition of *speaking cattle*. Churches must be wanted, or built, not by those who shall occupy them, but by the *profits of the wheel*. Colleges must languish, or sometimes ask the aid of foreign opulence. And must we beg the gifts we are to give away? Cannot we give the Bible to our own poor, cannot we preach the gospel to the heathen unless some part of our ability is drawn from *foreign hands*?

Fain would I stimulate—fain provoke—the country I love, to those generous and magnificent deeds of Christian philanthropy, which the wants of this world, and our own felicitous character and circumstances require.

Fellow-countrymen, fellow-christians, what is there human we cannot perform? and look where we will, in what direction is there not something to be done? While we scorn the thought, then, of resting on borrowed energies, let all our energies be consecrated to the great cause of Christian philanthropy which offers itself to our view. Favoured as we are, we ought to afford an *EXAMPLE* to the nations of the world, nor look either for *aid* or *example* from any.

PHIOPATRIS.

Montgomery, July 18.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.

Extracts from the Appendix to the Report of the Executive Committee for the management of the missions, first commenced by the Rev. John Wesley, the Rev. Dr. Coke, and others; and now carried on under the direction of the Methodist Conference.

No. I. PAGE 52.

[The following is the sermon of Petrus Panditti Sekarra, an account of whose conversion was given in our last. This sermon

was delivered to his idolatrous countrymen shortly after his own renunciation of the religion of Budhu, and discovers a mind in the author, of no common capacity and penetration. The style and figures are plain and simple, yet forcible; and admirably adapted to the genius and understanding of his hearers. Some of his arguments are, indeed, powerful and convincing; and would not disgrace the pen of an *American Christian*.—ED.]

JAMES, v. 19, 20.—“*Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him,*

“*Let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*”

Beloved brethren, to err from the truth, is to err from the true religion. The apostle James says, If one could convert a heathen, he would save a soul from death: that is; he whose soul was in danger of being lost, by continuing in a wrong way, is led into the right way, which leads to eternal life, and is saved. The multitude of his sins is covered, or prevented from being brought against him.

Beloved brethren, there are a great number of religions in the world, but of which one only can be the true religion, for all cannot be true. Therefore, that must be the true religion which admits a Creator, and one only everlasting God. Now, if one, with a hope of saving his soul, turns his back upon the religion of this eternal God, and worships another, his labour may be compared to a famished foolish kid, that endeavours to suck the horns of its mother, instead of the teat. Some religions deny the everlasting God, who created the world. But how, it must be asked, can a rational person believe them to be right? No man can see the soul: yet, from the motions, feelings, and other actions of the man, there can be no doubt of his having a soul. Therefore, my friends, cannot you be convinced, from this wonderful world, and the various parts of creation, namely, the heavens, earth, sea, sun, moon, stars, men, &c. and their regular organization, that there is a God, and all these are his works; and likewise, can’t we consider that these things cannot be made by themselves, and that it is impossible so to be.

If the world was created by itself, and not created by God, how is it possible that the wonderful events thereof should remain invariably the same, without the interposition of God? Will ever a ploughed field be ploughed properly, by the oxen alone, without a husbandman? If the creation is of itself, there must be much changeableness in the world, and a want of regular system and order. As, for instance, the members of a man, such as the nose, might come in the place of the ear, and the ear in the place of the nose; the chin in the place of the mouth, and the mouth in the place of the chin.

Friends, certainly God created the world, and the many things therein. He is an *eternal being*; he knows the events of the *past*, *present*, and the *future* times: he knows the thoughts of all the inhabitants of the world. If any one doubt that, it is nothing but

the mere obscurity which is the cause of his heathenish faith. The chicken in the egg could not see the sun, moon, and the world, being covered with a shell, and its eyes not being open; likewise, my brethren, you can't know and acknowledge the everlasting God, or believe in the Saviour, as you are covered with the shell of heathenish faith; and as you have not the light of understanding. Your eyes are not open: therefore we should rejoice and be thankful to God, and those preachers who lay before us such a just and cheerful religion of a Holy Trinity; consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Who can be averse to embrace this religion, offered by those who have some efficient knowledge thereof? Surely none. The apostle Paul says, in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. i. ver. 16. "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*"

Beloved brethren, I myself was one of the principal preachers of the Budhist religion, in this island of Ceylon; and during my priesthood, I not only acquired some proficiency in the Palic, Sanscrit and Cingalese sciences; I also spent good part of my time in preaching and learning the religious books of Budhu, and of some other religions. It is well known to you, that I was much esteemed among the Budhists for my preaching; and was respected and rewarded by royal favours, and by chief ministers of state; yet I found in that religion no Redeemer to save our souls from death; no Creator of the world, or a beginning to it. Consequently, I had some doubt always in my mind, as to its reality; and had some suspicion that the world and its thousand wonderful parts, was the creation of an Almighty God. While I was reflecting on this, a conversation took place between me and the head priest of *Saffergam* district, called *Attedassa Teronansey*, of the temple of *Kottembulwalle*. He asked me, who could believe that a child (as it is said in the Christian religion,) could be conceived in the womb of a virgin? To which I answered, If the world, and all its curious things, which we see about us, were created of themselves, it is no wonder that a child should have been conceived in the womb of a virgin? Upon which the priest was somewhat displeased with me. While I was in this condition, I happened, through the blessing of God Almighty, to speak with the pious Rev. Mr. Clough, since which, I have maintained a friendship with him, and have continued to attend and converse with him concerning the Christian religion. By this means, the obscurity and doubts which were over my mind, were perfectly cleared off, and the light of the Christian faith filled my mind in their stead, as easily as colours are received into fine white linen when painted; so I consented to be baptized. While I was in doubt, a large *Mandowe* was erected, in the place called *Galwadogde*, at *Galle*, for the performance of a very great ceremony of Budhu's religion; there were assembled 28 preachers (or priests) including myself, and an immense crowd of common people of both sexes. During that ceremony, I read over two chapters of the Gospel of St. Matthew before the multitude, and spoke to them

in a friendly manner. Some time afterwards, the people of *Galle* district, hearing that I was at the point of leaving the priesthood, and of being baptized, gathered into a large body, and spoke in such a manner against my intended baptism, that scarcely any man could have resisted them: in consequence of which, I was in a state of perplexity for some time, being strongly inclined to be baptized, on the one hand, and to comply with their request, on the other. But after my arrival in *Columbo*, all the hesitations and the agitations of my mind were completely done away, by the sweet and admirable advice I received from the Hon. and Rev. Thomas James Twisleton, the chief chaplain in this island. Just as darkness vanishes by the appearance of the sun, I was enlightened, and was actually baptized, without regarding the aversion and abuse I was likely to undergo from the people of the *Budhu*'s religion; giving up my relations and friends, the teachers of my former religion, and the situation I was in, and the lands and other property which I obtained from the *Budhu* priesthood. Thus I embraced Christianity, and became a member of Christ's church, which circumstance is perhaps known to every one of you. Beloved brethren, your principal object must be, to seek the means of obtaining a happy and eternal life. You are labouring, both day and night, to support this uncertain life, yet you never think of the means of saving your soul. If you labour so much for this uncertain and temporal life, how much more ought you to labour for the salvation of the immortal soul? Are we not sinners by nature, and under the curse of God? Yes. And why do not we think of the means of being saved? We being sinners by nature, God took compassion on our sad state, and sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, to suffer punishment, and to be crucified, and to die for our sake, and to save us from our sins: He also rose the third day from death, and ascended into Heaven. Now we have received the gospel wherein are contained his own doctrines, which he delivered while he was in this world, for the direction of mankind, and for their salvation. The holy gospel is the way to lead every man to salvation. We have many evidences to convince us of its truth, not only by the Holy Scriptures, but also in the profane histories of the ancient heathens. There is no other way of salvation except this very way by the gospel. Many persons in this world are worshipping images, made of wood, clay, &c. with a view of being saved by them; yet they do not consider that the images cannot hear their prayers, nor see their homages, neither accept a single thing of their offerings; consequently, those labours and services are of no use. They lead men to break the second commandment of our Creator, the Lord God. And can they be blessed of this? There are some persons who deny the existence of God; and say, Where is he? who saw Him? and many such foolish words; but it is the height of stupidity; for there is no man who can judge in what way the power and grace of God is bestowed. We ought only to consider that we are sinners, and to obtain salvation through Christ the Son of God. There is no profit in their entertaining such false and vain thoughts;

for they resemble a foolish physician, who is brought to cure a wounded man of an arrow received in a battle, who, instead of applying his remedies, quietly sits inquiring, who was the person that shot him? from whence the arrow came? what is the name of the archer? and many other long and foolish particulars, and so lets the man die. My brethren, do not entertain such vain thoughts as this foolish physician; look out for immediate remedies for salvation, pulling out the arrow of sin from you. It plainly appears to a good Christian, that the ceremonies of devils, prevailing in this country, are the ways leading to death. Some one of you say, If you forbear from doing evil works, there is no need of worshipping God. But I do assure you, that no man can be saved, though he do good works, if he do not worship the Godhead, consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; as the man will never grow fat, though he dress and ornament himself with much good apparel and jewels, unless he also eat food. Therefore, I conjure you to do good works, from a complete Christian faith in your hearts. We must be saved by faith in Christ; by loving God, keeping his commandments, praying to him, studying his religion, and repenting of our past sins: he who errs from this way, errs from the truth. Britannia, the queen, sent her children to shew the right way to the children of her sister Ceylonia. As a learned physician cures the leprosy with good remedies, we have good doctors to cure our false faith, and heathenism, with their enlightened doctrines. Therefore, if we are willing to be saved, why are we not saved? If a thirsty man refuses to drink pure cold water—and if a hungry man refuses to eat delicate victuals—and a naked man refuses to put on clean and valuable apparel—is it not his own fault? The chief means of being saved from death is, by faith towards God; consequently, the man who has a complete faith, ought to keep God's commandments, according as they appear in the Holy Scriptures, and leave off all evil works, and do all good works. There are three things in the heart of man which lead to all manner of evil, viz: covetousness, envy, and ignorance: and thus men, in consequence of these chief evils, or on account of covetousness, envy, and the ignorance of the true religion, do sin, by work, deed, and thought; they commit murders, thefts, and adulteries: by their words, they lie, backbite, talk roughly, so as to hurt a man's feelings; take the name of God in vain, and say other bad things; and in their thoughts covet the things and property of others. They are envious of the prosperity of others, and think that there is no God; all these things happen on account of the abovesaid covetousness, envy, and ignorance: all these evils are against his salvation. These things he ought to forsake; and ought to give alms according to his circumstances. He ought to speak courteously to others, and to conduct himself, in all his actions, so as not to be prejudicial to others, but beneficial; to consider the lives of all others as his own; these are the good works. Therefore, my brethren, let us endeavour to foorsake all the aforesaid evil things, be confirmed in good works, and not to err from the

right paths; but to lead those into the right paths, and to participate of the redemption of Christ, and the love of Almighty God; so SHALL WE SAVE THEIR SOULS FROM DEATH, AND HIDE A MULTITUDE OF SINS.

DOMESTICK.

Proceedings of the General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States, at their first Triennial Meeting, held in Philadelphia, from the 7th to the 14th of May, 1817.

(Continued from p. 173.)

The convention have heard with pleasure of the arrival of Mr. Hough and family, together with Mrs. White, in India; and that the former are now at Rangoon engaged with Mr. and Mrs. Judson in the work of the Lord. More missionaries being importunately solicited in Burmah, the board will have an opportunity of gratifying our friends there, and of promoting the kingdom of the Messiah, by sending out two pious youths, whose minds have been directed to foreign missions, and who for the last two years have been enjoying the instructions of an able and excellent teacher, the Rev. Mr. Chaplin, at Danvers, Massachusetts. They are well recommended for their amiable dispositions, the uprightness of their conversation, the competency of their talents, and their devotedness to the service of the Lord Jesus. It is expected they will leave the land of their nativity, and sail for the spiritually benighted regions of Burmah by some early conveyance. We are persuaded you will help them by your fervent and repeated prayers.

The ignorance, transgression, and misery with which our earth is covered, impressively call for the combined exertions of the people of God; but the capacity of missionary establishments is necessarily restricted. It may be considered a question of difficulty, what sections of the dominion of the prince of darkness shall be first invaded? In some respects the section is of little moment, for the soul of man is every where stamped with an equal value. The spirit of foreign and domestick missions is one. It is as incapable of being divided as is the spirit of personal and social devotion. Regions where the darkness is grossest, and the means of illumination most remote, present a peculiar claim. The question, however, it is believed, has never been attended with practical embarrassment. He who stirs up his people to offer cheerfully of their substance, and his messengers to venture forth in his name, commonly points by the finger of his providence to the field for labour, as distinctly as he did in the apostolick age by impressive visions, or the immediate voice of his holy Spirit. The kingdoms of Providence and grace are, by THE HEIR OF ALL THINGS, controlled and harmonized. It was Providence confess that directed our English brethren to Serampore. It is Providence that has

placed before us the wretched natives of Burmah, and inspired the cry—"Christians of America, come over and help us!" The interesting history of the settling of our brother Judson at Rangoon forbids a contrary conclusion.

The same gracious direction which it becomes all missionary societies earnestly to solicit, and conscientiously to obey, is opening other spheres on our own continent. A respectable and well recommended missionary, whom the convention find pleasure in encouraging the board to adopt, has offered his services in New-Orleans and its vicinity. In the south-western department of our Union, the fields for missionary attempt are wide and promising. Impressions made in New Orleans and Louisiana may make way for the triumphs of redeeming grace, in the regions where the policy, avarice and ambition of Cortez and Pizarro, strewed the plains with desolation and mortality.

It is a circumstance remarkable and pleasing, that two young brethren have had their minds seriously impressed with a conviction, that if Divine Providence approved, it would become their duty to commence a Western mission. For upwards of the last twelve months they have been engaged in preparatory studies under the direction of the Baptist Education Society in Philadelphia. Their pulpit talents are in a high degree respectable, and have been welcomed among the churches of Christ where they have had opportunities of preaching his name. The immediate sphere of action to which their minds have been directed, and which it is believed they may, with the approbation and encouragement of the board, to advantage occupy, is the vicinity of St. Louis on the western banks of the Mississippi. A spiritual dearth there exists. A mission established in this part of our continent, extending itself to the Indians in the west, the convention consider it their duty to encourage and support.

It is pleasing to observe, that the minds of the churches and brethren in the western states have been strongly incited to this important object. The convention has cause to rejoice in the indications of the advance of the work of the Lord afforded by the numerous applications for the missionary service.

In contemplating the state of our Union the convention cannot suppress its joy on observing the associations generally interesting themselves in the work of missions. Means are usually proportioned to the magnitude of the objects which infinite intelligence designs to accomplish. The almost universal readiness discovered by one hundred and twenty or thirty associations to encourage the service, and the lively zeal of the almost equally numerous and increasing missionary societies, intent on the salvation of the heathen, justify the conclusion that the Head of the church is preparing to effect some glorious result. He who marshalled even the stars in their courses to fight against an opposing Sisera, is now marshalling his saints, that, through their instrumentality, the stratagems and energies of hell may be defeated, and "the prince of

this world be cast out." If it be asked, why have missionary efforts been so long deferred? We might answer by asking, why was the reformation delayed so long? or, why was not the idea of Bible institutions, of Sunday schools, and of Tract societies, earlier conceived and brought into efficiency? The truth seems to lie in this single consideration. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the sun." Sometimes, for reasons which infinite wisdom approves and eternal rectitude will vindicate, the hand of God is hidden in his bosom, while, at other seasons, it is revealed. We have lived to see the period when "the Lord has made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations;" when minor exhibitions of mercy lose their importance in a glory that excelleth. "It is a light thing," saith the Lord, "that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to preserve the restored of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth."

The convention has observed with abundant satisfaction, the cheerful and liberal exertions of pious females. These have formed numerous societies, and in several instances sent their delegates, consisting for the most part of ministering brethren, to the general meeting. They sincerely hope that such as have commenced this blessed service will abound in it more and more, and that many others will copy their luminous example. Every enlightened female must know that where Christianity exists not, the character of woman is shamefully degraded. Our Lord, when on earth, welcomed the ministrations of holy women, and he welcomes them still. Is it prophesied "the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift?" the daughters of America have already anticipated her offering.

In perusing the recent accounts from our missionary brethren in Asia, it is pleasing to observe that their labours are very much directed to the establishment of schools among the heathen, for the education of youth. This effort, the result of wisdom and experience, promises extensive good. The attention of the juvenile mind is easily arrested. Prejudices against Christian teachers are destroyed in the blossom, and it may reasonably be hoped, with the blessing of God, that the young offspring of idolators, trained up in the way in which they should go, when old will not depart from it. While the convention cordially approves, and heartily rejoices in the lovely project, they cannot forget that there are thousands of our youth in the United States that need similar instructions. Sunday schools are multiplying in America: It is most solemnly wished that you may feel the importance of such institutions, and that you endeavour to originate and support them to the utmost extent of your ability.

The loss of a number of celebrated Grecian youth is by one of their orators compared to the loss of the buds of spring. Too much attention to the tuition of the rising generation can scarcely

be paid. They are the buds from which future fruit is to be collected. It is hoped that such as have it in their power will not conceive property ill-employed when used for this very important end. Such as cannot command funds for instruction, ought to be taken under the zealous and faithful management of Sunday school establishments.

To the subject of education generally, the mind of the convention has been seriously directed. They stated, in part, their ideas relative to this point in their first address. They wish to recall your attention to this most interesting topick, particularly in relation to such pious young men, as shall possess talents which promise usefulness in the Word. They are fully sensible, that, in relation to grace in the heart, a sacred necessity compelling to the work, and the valuable success that shall accompany pulpit labour, the Lord alone can make able ministers of the New Testament: but when they mark the advantages which those servants of the church enjoy who can read the lively oracles in their original languages; when they consider the improved, and rapidly improving state of society, in which the grammar of the English language is generally taught; when they mark the zeal which other Christian societies are exercising on this subject, and the advantages which it secures them; when they consider how much literary assistance is desired by godly and intelligent young men, and the facility with which it may be obtained by a little, generous, and common exertion, they feel compelled, affectionately and importunately, to solicit your bounty and influence. A scheme in favour of education being introduced, the convention were unanimous as to the importance of the subject, and left it in charge with the board to give it that maturity and publicity which they shall approve. It is hoped that something on this point will be speedily and vigorously attempted. It is certain education may be abused, and so may health and food and civil liberty, and every blessing of earth and heaven; but it is equally certain that it may be improved for purposes profitable to the church of God, and conducive to the best interests of thousands. The difficulties on this subject felt by some pious brethren, are, like vapours of the morning, vanishing.

The agency employed within the United States by the board, for giving birth and stability to mission societies, and efficient operation to a plan of systematick general intercourse, is fully approved by the convention. They believe that the continuance of such an agency will be of signal use to the cause of God.

When the royal prophet prayed, "O Lord send out thy light and thy truth!" he subjoined the request, let it "lead me and guide me." Missionary endeavours will be of no avail to our personal welfare, without the spirit of individual religion. Let family worship be solemnly regarded. Remember, beloved friends, conscientiously remember, the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Encourage prayer meetings, and especially the monthly prayer meetings for the spread of the gospel. Walk worthy of God unto all well pleasing, and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

God of his mercy grant that when the Judge of all the earth shall appear, you and we may be accepted of him, "not having on our own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Yours affectionately, in the gospel,

RICHARD FURMAN. Pres.

DANIEL SHARP, Secr'y.

MISCELLANEOUS.

COMMUNICATED.

Extract from a Sermon du Pere Bardaloue.

"The moment we commit sin, we experience *remorse of conscience* in ourselves, which proceeds from the internal reprehension of sin. I say that this remorse is a *grace*. A grace, say theologians, is that aid which the Deity affords to man, in order that he may be enabled, in a manner, to merit eternal happiness; and, if a sinner, to work out his salvation; this is the definition of the schools. Now this definition is entirely agreeable to those feelings of remorse which we experience after the commission of sin; for it is certain that God is their author; that his love for us causes him to excite them; and that he employs them for our conversion. From which I conclude that this remorse has in verity all the qualities of a grace. "Yes," saith the Eternal speaking to the sinner. "It is *I*, it is *I myself*, "who will reprehend thee for thy wickedness and crimes. When "after the perpetration of evil, thy conscience is disturbed, refer "not for the cause to any other than *me*, and inquire not elsewhere, "whence proceedeth thy trouble. A hundred times after yielding "to temptation thou wilt wish to conceal from thyself thy delin- "quency; thou wilt avert thine eyes from the contemplation of thy "sins, and wilt suppose that I will do the same, and join in the pal- "liation of thy miserable wickedness, but thou art mistaken. For, "being thy Sovereign and thy God, I will always declare myself "thy Accuser, and never shalt thou offend my holy laws, but I, im- "mediately will display before thee, in spite of thy efforts to the "contrary, all thy iniquities, in all their turpitude." Do you not perceive, my friends, how God is the author of your compunctions visitings? But by what motive is he actuated in producing them within us? I will tell you: by *love*. It is the effect of his *benevolence*, the effusion of his *mercy*. Is there any other evidence of this required besides that declaration of the Son of God when he announced to his apostles the coming of the Holy Spirit. "The World," said the adorable Saviour, "shall be reproved for their sins;" and by whom shall it be reproved? by the Spirit of truth, which, for that purpose I will send. What is meant by this Spirit of truth? It signifies the substantial *love* of the Father and the Son; that divine principle which is charity itself. Have a care my dear hearers, it is the love of God which reproves us, when we are sinners. Is there room for a doubt after this that the remorse of our

conscience is a grace? A grace not external, but internal, since this worm which dieth not, or this compunction of conscience is originated within us, even in the centre of our souls. For hence, says saint Paul, hath the spirit of God descended into our hearts incessantly to cry out against our disorders. It exclaims, says St. Augustine, not as a preacher who speaking to us inveighs against the irregularities of our lives; for all the preachers in the world have not sufficient power to penetrate the conscience; and when their words strike the ear, it is often so distant from the heart, that they fail to reach it. But the Spirit of God is placed as it were in the interior of the soul, in order that it may be better heard, and from thence, says St. Augustine, it sends forth a voice continually, condemning our passions, censuring our pleasures and reprobating our sins. Ah! Christians, shall we be ungrateful and hardened to such a degree, as to miscall this opposition of the Holy Spirit an importunate severity and not discover and acknowledge that it is a gift of grace, a mercy to the sinner, an assistance in the work of his redemption, a happy means of recalling him to God. Shall we be so blind as to consider as an insufferable torment, the spur which excites us to press forward to the prize of our high calling, and to wish deliverance from it? No, adorable Saviour, we will not judge and desire thus: and since we know, that it is thy Spirit, thy comforting Spirit which produces in us our remorse, we will receive it as a benefit from thy hand, and very far from breaking out into complaints against it, we will think in what manner by our fidelity we shall render thee sensible of our gratitude."

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Edinburgh to his correspondent in Princeton, N. J.

BIBLE CAUSE.—“Our latest accounts from Russia are most encouraging. The appearances in the character of the emperor are more and more favourable. He lately asked the prince Galitzin, why he did not go on faster with the Bible Society; adding, “What do you want? Money! It is at your service; would my personal attendance at the meeting of your committee promote the cause? I will attend most willingly.” By the last letters from Mr. Henderson who is at present at Pittsburgh, he says the Russian Bible Society is distributing the Bible in twenty-five different languages, that in consequence of the Russian envoy at Constantinople taking a warm interest in the Bible cause, copies of the word of God are pouring into the various islands in the Archipelago. The envoy at Constantinople conducts the correspondence with the Bible Society personally. In the Russian army too, a great interest has been excited about the dissemination of the word of God.”—*N. Y. Pap.*

Extracted from the Fourth Annual Report of the City of London Auxiliary Bible Society.

JEWS SUBSCRIBERS TO BIBLE ASSOCIATIONS.—It is a singular fact, which deserves renewed attention, that many of the Jewish

people continue to subscribe for Bibles and to support the institution. To one of the associations there are nearly fifty who bring in their regular contributions. Another details the following anecdote, which shews that some inquiries have been excited among the Jewish children: "An apprentice boy applied for a Bible, offering to subscribe one shilling per quarter, till the whole was discharged. He paid one shilling, and appeared very anxious to have his Bible; but on being told that the money must be paid before the book could be delivered, he soon after brought the remainder of the sum, saying, that as his master had given him a Christmas box, he thought he could not spend it better. On being asked whether he was not a Jew, he answered in the affirmative. He was questioned as to his belief in the New-Testament, but replied, that though he did not believe it, he felt an earnest desire to read the history which it contained."

Notwithstanding the zealous attempts of the Christian world to promote Christianity among the Jewish nation have hitherto been marked with little success, yet the recovery of that ancient people is a distinguished topick in the Holy Scriptures, and a frequent theme of prophecy. Each revolving year must therefore bring the event nearer, and perhaps it is an honour reserved chiefly for the volume of inspiration, that its general diffusion among the seed of Abraham, in common with other means of instruction, and accompanied with that influence which shall rend the veil from their understandings, and soften the obduracy of their hearts, shall be principally instrumental in bringing them to embrace that Messiah, whom their fathers rejected and crucified.

Benevolent Labour of the Aged.

We are able to state on good authority, that a lady, not less than seventy years of age, has lately opened a Sabbath School in Adams County, Ohio, for the instruction of children in the neighbourhood where she resides. Considering her advanced age, the attempt was thought by some to be whimsical. But in a very short time the school increased until the number of her pupils exceeded fifty; when she found it necessary to call in two female friends to assist her. Hence, let the aged take encouragement to employ their remaining strength in labours of love, and let the young be excited to devote the prime and vigour of their lives to the service of God and the good of mankind.—*Week. Rec.*

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